DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 109 802 EA 007 390

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TITLE Libraries and Instructional Materials Centers.
PUB DATE [75]
NOTE 22p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 PLUS POSTAGE. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Annotated Bibliographies; Elementary Secondary Education; *Facility Planning; Flexible Facilities; *Library Facilities; *Library Planning; Library Services; Publications; Reference Materials; *School Libraries

ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography presents summaries of 15 publications concerned with the use and design of school library facilities and media centers. In a brief introduction, the author examines current trends in the use of school libraries and discusses the importance of carefully specifying the functions and purposes of such facilities early in the planning process. The need to design flexible facilities that can be readily expanded or modified to meet future needs is also emphasized. Annotations range from approximately 140 to 200 words. (JG)

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LIBRARIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTERS

Sister Marie Crettol

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Present day trends in philosophy of learning that look upon libraries as teaching laboratories which make room for individuality have caused library architects and designers to change and modify their plans.

During the nineteenth century education was largely a matter of subject matter taught with strict discipline. But change came with the twentieth century. Educators turned to the psychic security of the student as the key to development of man. Teaching methods became involved with the "whole child" especially with his personality growth and social development and the educational climate of psychological and social warmth became the cornerstone of education. After World War II educators shifted their view to restoring mastery of subject matter as their primary concern with personal and social problems assigned to especially trained personnel. Teaching methods were questioned and the traditional approach which emphasized teaching too much at the expense of learning gave way to teaching methods that help students learn how to formulate attacks on problems as well as to acquire information for its own sake.

Patterns of independent study and varied group sizes have already had considerable impact on school architecture. If students are to pursue knowledge on their own, they must be provided with facilities to do so. The school library or instruc-

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tional media center which by its nature is the appropriate academic area for individual inquiry should be equipped for this task. Unless physical means are provided by which students can pursue knowledge independently the expectation that they will do so is illusory.

Proper planning will determine the success or failure of the new or remodeled building facility. Educational specifications which describe in detail what the building is supposed to do and what services and activities are to take place within its areas must be made. Every function, purpose, and objective desired of the new facility must be defined so that it will provide the architect with a guide noting everything the school wants the library to be and do. These specifications should be drawn up only after consultation with the library personnel, administrators, library users, and architects.

Probably the most important physical factor to consider is the location of the library in relation to other school activities. It should be located at the point where students, parents, and teachers pass through several times a day. Ideally it should be proximate to student used areas including recreational areas as well as class teaching rooms and other learning centers. The location must also be planned so that the facility can be utilized at times when the rest of the school is not in session.

Another factor to keep in mind is the potential for future expansion. Space for expansion can be made available by locating the library adjacent to classrooms and other types of easily alterable structural spaces. With the rapid production of education materials it would be unwise to build or remodel an exist-

ing library which does not permit expansion of the area.

With the emphasis placed on independent learning, facilities, furniture, and equipment for the students have changed depending on the type of material needed. Since privacy and the intimacy of small groups rather than tables in the middle of large open reading rooms are more conducive to independent study, most of the study space should be in the form of study carrels, some of which are acoustically treated and provided with electrical inputs for the use of electrical equipment. Several small rooms with tables and chairs should be available for students who need to do their work in small groups. These rooms should be comparatively sound proof so that they can serve for the use of audio-visual equipment, typewriters, and calculating machines. One or two projection rooms for reviewing slides, films, and tapes should also be provided. Another space that seems to be much in demand today is one that provides a comfortable, friendly, inviting atmosphere for recreational reading.

Libraries should be designed with potential users in mind and planners should not neglect the handicapped who can participate in many library activities if minimal architectural and room adaptations are made. All materials should be easily accessible and retrievable to the users. Intershelving books, filmstrips, tapes, transparancies, and models on specific topics can enhance accessibility and save time going from one room or area to another in search of information on a single topic.

Lighting, color and temperature have a great impact on the library atmosphere. In considering lighting, quality, function and esthetics are of prime importance. Quality and function

must be studied together, for what would be quality lighting for one function would not be satisfactory for another. In regard to the learning environment, although quality and functional aspects are considered first, the aesthetic effects of lighting are important.

In order to develop a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere the problem of color should also be given considerable time and attention. The architect in consultation with lighting specialists and media personnel should determine which colors and shades would contribute most to the learning environment and yet make the areas attractive and inviting.

Temperature, if too hot or too cold, can drive students away from the library. So too can distracting noises or tomb-like silence. The emphasis in planning a library should be placed on keeping at a minimum those environmental factors which place handicaps on the students. Proper lighting, heating, acoustics, and ventilation of libraries are essential. However when planning facilities to provide these conditions care must be taken to build or remodel structures that will conserve energy instead of becoming wasteful consumers of energy in the form of excessive lighting, heating, and air-conditioning.

Since librarians and media specialists are very concerned about the total area of the building usable for library purposes, the seating capacity, capacity for books and non book materials, and costs of building and furnishings, considerable research and planning should be done in these areas. Probably because of the high rising costs of building and furnishing the trend seems to be pointing more toward renovations and additions than new

structures. In remodeling the conversion of the United States to the metric system within the next decade will cause some problems in readjustments both in the architecture and the furnishings.

If we are to plan library facilities that will be effective centers of learning now and in the future, it is important that we study the conditions of our present facilities noting which conditions encourage and challenge students to further study and exploration and which are really barriers to learning. More and varied spaces, rooms, equipment, and materials of themselves do not insure an improved program.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ad Hoc Committee on the Physical Facilities of Libraries. Measurement and Comparison of Physical Facilities for Libraries. Chicago, American Library Association, 1970. 22p.

Librarians in evaluating and comparing new physical facilities of libraries are interested in the following data:

1. Total area of the building
2. Area of the building usable for library purposes
3. Capacity of the building in books and in seats for readers
4. Cost of the building on a per square foot basis
5. Cost of the furnishings and equipment

Although the information can be quantified, the number of variables involved and the different procedures in reporting used by librarians, architects, and administrators lead to a lack of uniformity which limits the usefulness of the information. The purpose of the study made by the Ad Hoc Committee was to establish standard terminology and methods of measurement by means of which library buildings could be evaluated and compared with greater accuracy than has been possible. Their work resulted in an eight page glossary of definitions and procedures which, they believe, if applied uniformly and consistently will enable measurement and comparison of the physical facilities of libraries to be more effective and useful in planning future library facilities.

Briggs, Paul W. "School Media Center Architectural Requirements." School Media Quarterly, 2, 3 (Spring 1974) pp. 200-202.

Today's new library should be a setting for learning: attractive, adaptable, multidimensional, and comfortable. Since architectural features assist in creating the learning atmosphere, as careful attention should be given to the architectural details of the interior design as to the building itself. Spatial variation consisting of large open areas which may be divided or rearranged are critical. Small and large conference rooms and comfortable areas for pleasure reading, listening, and viewing are also necessary. Informal areas for quiet study or reading, work areas with tables in open arrangement, and individual study areas with carrels should be provided.

The strict uniformity of old fashioned libraries allowed for little or no individuality or innovation. However with the variety of spaces, levels, rooms, and furniture provided in the design of new schools, originality and creativity are both encouraged and fostered.

The library should be centrally located in spirit and as close to the physical center as possible so that it may become a part of the student's daily life. It is the focal point around which all school learning and activities should revolve.

Space must be available for expansion as enrollment grows. Areas adjacent to the library should consist of classrooms and other types of easily alterable structural spaces that can be gradually taken over by the library as it expands and as the need for these spaces diminishes.

Ernst, William B. "New Buildings." Library Trends, 19, 3 (January 1971) pp. 290-298.

Problems in planning and designing new libraries are many and the solutions are as varied as the local situations permit. However the basic problem is not a question of architecture alone. It is relatively easy to program and design a simple structure with masses of open space which can be arranged and rearranged and with sufficient storage for learning materials. The problem lies in providing a central location easily accessible to users, in organizing materials so that users may find and use them readily, and in having space for expansion.

Some large libraries have begun to centralize their dispersed collections and services with great accessibility through well planned open stacks. The State University of New York came up with an "ideal" solution to its problem of inaccessibility. The central campus area was excavated to house their entire collection underground with the above ground faculty libraries having access to the collection while maintaining their proximity to department areas. This solution not only solved the problem of accessibility but also the ever present problem of space for expansion. One cannot solve the problem of library growth by not allowing them to grow. Since it is the nature of collections to expand and they must be allowed to do so to be fully effective, plans for expansion should be made during the initial construction.

Fast, Elizabeth. "Blueprint for Action." School Media Quarterly, 2, 3 (Spring 1974) pp. 194-199.

The fundamental factor that will determine the success or failure of the new or remodeled media center is the blueprint for the program that will take place in the facility. The blueprint contains the educational specifications which are the result of consultation with the media users, especially the teachers, regarding the function, purpose, and objectives desired in the new facility. These specifications when complete provide a guide which tells the architect what the building is supposed to do and what activities it is supposed to house. It defines and describes the elements of the library and should try to define the spatial interrelationships. The media staff should not try to do the architect's work but should tell him what the school needs and wants. Plans for the new program must be translated into action simultaneously with the construction program.

Media staff members must maintain lines of communication with the architects through direct consultation so that the facility which is designed will fit the program which the staff has been planning. A changed and improved program will not happen magically because the library has more space, equipment, and materials but will be the result of a painstaking detailed analysis of the function and purpose of the new facility translated into reality.

Hoffman, Elizabeth. "Ten Commandments for Media Center Planners." School Media Quarterly, 2, 3 (Spring 1974) pp. 223-226.

The article lists ten guidelines for media center planners. They are based on the philosophy that the chief function of a library is to be a learning laboratory in which the use of all resources is purposeful, planned, and organized in such a way to broaden and individualize the total education experience. It is a difficult task to plan and develop a media facility that is functional as well as esthetic, comfortable, readily accessible and provides for maximum control with minimum supervision.

Ten Commandments for Media Center Planners

1. Program predetermines plan
2. Form follows function
3. Pragmatics supersedes aesthetics
4. Quality is true economy
5. Users participate in planning
6. Maximum control with minimum supervision determines component pattern
7. Accessibility invites users
8. Multiple use avoids space abuse
9. Shelving out ranks windows
10. One wall leads to the future

Jussim, Estelle. "Personal Space and the Media Center." School Media Quarterly, 2, 3 (Spring 1974) pp. 189-193.

The most crucial factor in the design of interior spaces is the physical and psychobiological characteristics of individuals who will use the facility and should not be overlooked in planning for libraries. However, according to the author, in many cases the psychobiological needs of individuals are ignored. Consider the typical school library which consists of a large rectangular room containing rows of rectangular tables with chairs on either side, rows of rectangular stacks quite close together, rows of individual carrels parallel to the stacks and a production office. Every inch of floor space is used. Discipline is easy to enforce because the staff has a clear view of the entire seating arrangement.

If form would follow function and psychobiological needs were considered libraries would include a variety of kinds and sizes of space: large and small, round and rectangular, curved and straight, open and enclosed. Free-standing enclosures, open conversation pits, raised platforms, and sufficient space to promote a feeling of well-being should be provided. In order to fill the physical and psychobiological needs of individuals who will use the facility, libraries should be comfortable, friendly, and inviting. This atmosphere can be partly achieved through the use of light, color, space, and furniture properly designed and arranged.

Kay, Jane Holtz. "Ideals and Axioms: Library Architecture." American Library, 5, 5 (May 1974) pp. 240-246.

Jane Holtz Kay is an architecture critic for The Nation who believes that of all institutions the library should belong to the users, inspiring strong feelings of ownership and identity. She is very critical of architects who ignor the human factors, designing libraries as monuments to their own talents. Architects planning libraries with extremes of windowless walls and wide open security proof future oriented spaces do not take into consideration the human dimensions of the users. However architects are not totally to blame for these features since much pressure is put on them by media personnel to incorporate such features into the buildings. Another drawback to present day libraries is the fact that they are wasteful comsumers of energy in the form of excessive lighting, heating, and air-conditioning in sealed buildings.

The author states that libraries should be located at the heart of the school. They should be open and unstructured encouraging students to handle books and materials as they would in their own homes. The architecture and warmth of the atmosphere should invite students to use the library spaces for study, research, and pleasurable reading. Standards for libraries should be based on the independent evaluations of architects, librarians, and especially the ordinary user.

McGarth, Lawrence. "Student Access to Libraries and Library Resources in Secondary Schools." Occassional Papers, 97 (February 1970) pp. 6-22.

This paper explores the concept of accessibility of the library and in the light of accepted library standards examines the present status of accessibility in secondary schools in the United States and finds them lacking.

Accessibility to the resources of school library media centers is a prerequisite to their use. The library should be located proximate to student-used areas including recreational areas, class teaching rooms, and laboratories, and other study and learning centers. It is important that the location of the library be planned so that it may be utilized at times when the remainder of the school is closed to the students. A third requisite is that the location permit for the expansion which growth of resources and services will make essential.

Opportunities for use of resources are made realizable where enough space, varied in purpose, is available to meet the students needs. Single study carrels, conference rooms, comfortable areas for recreational reading and space for efficient use of audio-visual equipment by the student is necessary. Only when the library becomes accessible to all students will it fulfill its function as a resource center.

Metcalf, Keyes D. Library Lighting. Association of Research Libraries, Washington, D.C., 1970. pp. 5-16.

In considering lighting problems, quality, function, intensity, aesthetics, and cost are very much intertwined. There is no single solution which can be applied with complete satisfaction to all libraries or even to all parts of one library.

The quality of lighting cannot be judged without considering the purpose it serves. For what is quality lighting in one area of the building may be unsatisfactory for another. Quality lighting comprises much more than the avoidance of too high or low intensities. It involves lighting without glare, reflection or shadows on working surfaces, or great contrasts between the work surface and the surroundings.

The question of how much light intensity should be provided is one of the most controversial problems in library lighting. Increased intensity decreases quality unless care is taken to prevent glare and reflections that can result.

Most administrators are willing to pay for lighting that will improve appearances and help create a satisfactory environment for study. Although the quality and functional aspects of lighting are considered first, the aesthetic effects of lighting are important.

The cost of installation, operating, and maintaining library lighting is large. However false economy in lighting can be diastrous and library lighting is so important that its quality must not be neglected.

Orne, Jerrold. "Academic Library Building in 1974." Library Journal, 99, 21 (December 1974) pp. 3099-3105.

This article contains a review of academic library buildings in 1974. It lists new libraries and provides charts indicating the cost of the projects, space for books, and materials, and seating capacity. The percentage of assignable space for seating and book capacity for the larger libraries dropped drastically while in the intermediate and smaller libraries both seating capacity and space for books and materials increased.

In 1974 many institutions found adding on to and renovating existing libraries more feasible than constructing new buildings. The author attributes this to two factors: 1) libraries built in the last twenty years were built with internal flexibility and expansion in mind, and 2) swiftly rising costs and the natural reluctance of administrators to abandon any still useable building.

In summary Orne concludes that there were more building projects in 1974 than in 1973 but that they were smaller and included many more renovations and additions than new structures.

Porttens, Elnora M. "Media Center Facilities." School Media Quarterly, 2, 3 (Spring 1974) pp. 203 212.

This photographic essay contains pictures of libraries or media centers in seven public schools in Cleveland, Ohio. Their architecture suggests the possibility of new and varied uses together with a warm comfortable atmosphere. Materials, forms, and spaces are so arranged as to lead the user from entrance to the center of activity. The media environment is designed to meet diverse needs and lends itself to rearrangement of the forms and spaces as students, teachers, and curriculum demand.

The media center is always the focal point of the building both physically and philosophically. It is located that students, parents, and teachers pass around and through it many times a day. Even though in theory students will use a good library even if it is inconviently located, it should be in the physical center of the building, the point where the heaviest traffic converges. An entrance that leads onto the street for direct access so that the library can be operated as an independent part of the school plant when the adjoining building areas are closed is necessary. Future expansion is also a factor which must be considered in planning the media center facilities. One wall should be so located that it can be the point for expansion. The centers pictured in this photographic essay are characterized by accessibility, versatility, and congeniality.

Shapero, Lillian L., "Media Centers: Rare and Well Done." School Library Journal, 21, 3 (November 1974) pp. 21-27.

Important factors to consider in the construction or remodeling of media centers are the location of the facility, the types of areas demanded by the varying purposes of the school, and the accessibility of the center to the users. This article describes several examples of successful media programs in the Northeast stressing these factors.

A very large school decided to locate its media center close to the student union which is the general meeing place where all daily activities of high school students go on. In this location the center would be in view of the students all the time and easily accessible to the students throughout the day.

In order to satisfy the demands of one school's philosophy which emphasized independent study as a prime factor, the choice of architecture included a large number of study carrels, conference rooms, areas for small groups discussions, and other rooms for listening, recording, and viewing.

Another example described how a small library with old-fashioned architecture was remodeled by brightening the room with proper lighting, changing the furniture to light colored wood, rearranging shelves and furniture, and adding an adjoining room to provide sufficient space for the areas needed to create a learning atmosphere.

Van Buren, Martin. "Libraries and the Metric System." Library Journal, 99, 11 (June 1974) pp. 1515-1518.

Within the next decade the United States will convert to the metric system. This will require readjustment in computation both in architecture and furnishings. Even more important, especially to planners, will be the demand to adjust familiar images in terms of space and size.

The author brings up a number of problems that will arise when library buildings of the future are planned around metric modules. For example, what happens when a library on the English system must expand or change its inner arrangement of spaces, move its present thirty-six inch stacks to a new location, or more difficult still, integrate them with additional stacks constructed in the metric system. Some solutions to integration of old-dimensioned stacks and spaces with new metric ones are offered but each library has its own unique staff and situation with problems which must be resolved by them in the light of the school's philosophy. There is no such thing as the perfect program or theperfect solution applicable to all libraries who will be forced to change together with the United States conversion to the metric system. Media staff members should become acquainted with the new system and gradually begin to think metric.

Veihman, Robert A. "Some Thoughts on Intershelving." Audio-visual Instruction, 18, 3 (March 1973) pp. 87-88.

The chief organizational function of the library is to make all materials easily accessible and retrievable to the users of the facility. One way to accomplish this function is to intershelve books, filmstrips, tapes, and transparancies on specific topics so that the student will not waste time going from one room or area to another searching for information on a particular subject. He would find not only reading materials but all audio-visual materials available in that one area and the equipment and space for viewing, listening, or studying.

Intershelving does require some changes in the architecture and design of the center. Additional shelving, tables, and chairs, housing containers, projection booths, and the like will be necessary. With little imagination and inventiveness these changes can be done with a minimum of cost.

According to the author, the intershelving arrangement makes damage and loss of expensive non book materials more possible. However, he believes, for the benefit of the user library materials should be treated equally and we should not fear to provide space, environment, and equipment so that non book materials can be used. These materials, when available, are a valuable source of learning especially when they are accompanied with book materials.

Velleman, Ruth A. "Library Adaptations for the Handicapped." School Library Journal, 21, 2 (October 1974) pp. 85-88.

Presnt-day trends in school library architecture and design emphasize the changes in philosophy of learning that looks upon libraries as teaching laboratories which make room for individuality. Libraries should be designed with all potential users in mind, even the handicapped. Minimal architectural and room adaptations together with common sense can enable many handicapped students to participate in library activities which may otherwise be inaccessible to them.

The article suggests a number of ways to adapt libraries for the handicapped. The following adaptations could be made without major change or expense. The library should be a warm, comfortable centrally located room containing floors covered with an institutional grade tackless acrylic carpet which has a tight weave and a thick jute backing. No padding is used and carpet is cemented to the floor. Thresholds should consist of metal strips with gripper edges to provide level entrances into the library. There should be ramps leading to light-weight doors which have see through panels. Some shelving and equipment modifications must be made.

Together with physical adaptations aides, either staff members or students, should be available to assist the handicapped students so that they may make use of all library materials.

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